DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 107 367 PS 007 877

TITLE Expanding Early Education: The Extended Day Kindergarten.
INSTITUTION Ferguson-Florissant School District, Ferguson, Mo.
PUB DATE [74]
NOTE 15p.

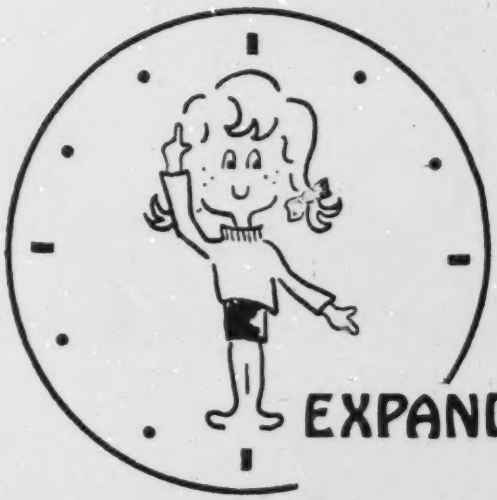
EDRS PRICE MF-$0.76 HC-$1.58 PLUS POSTAGE
DESCRIPTORS Child Development; *Elementary Education; *Extended School Day; Flexible Schedules; Grouping (Instructional Purposes); Home Visits; *Kindergarten; Parent Education; *Parent Participation; Parent Teacher Cooperation; *Program Descriptions; Teacher Aides

ABSTRACT

This booklet briefly describes an extended day kindergarten program designed to provide a well-rounded curriculum stressing cognitive, social, and physical development; a longer period of time daily for the child in school (four and a half to five hours instead of only three); and greater opportunity for the establishment of parent-teacher relationships. Part of the teacher's time is allocated to home visits in which the teacher discusses the child's progress and ways parents can help the child at home and at school. The three plans used in organizing the extended day schedule are outlined. General information on grouping, use of parent aides, and the establishment of the parent-teacher relationships is included. (ED)

ED107367

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH,
EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
EDUCATION
THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY



EXPANDING EARLY EDUCATION:

The Extended Day Kindergarten

Parent-Child Early Education Program
Ferguson-Florissant School District

CS 002874

00002

contents

Page

1 Introduction

4 The Extended Day

7 Planning for Learning: Grouping

8 Planning for Learning: Parent Assistance in the School

9 Planning for Learning: Teacher Assistance in the Home

12 Summary

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS COPYRIGHTED MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Ferguson-Florissant School District

TO ERIC AND ORGANIZATIONS OPERATING UNDER AGREEMENTS WITH THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION. FURTHER REPRODUCTION OUTSIDE THE ERIC SYSTEM REQUIRES PERMISSION OF THE COPYRIGHT OWNER.

Copyright

Credit to the school district should be shown on any reproduction of this material. Please write:

PARENT-CHILD EARLY EDUCATION PROGRAM

Ferguson-Florissant School District

655 January Avenue

Ferguson, Missouri 63135

St. Louis County

00003

introduction

Just over one hundred years ago the first public kindergarten was established in the United States. Since then the number of schools providing experience for five year olds has expanded, and the majority of states now support public kindergartens. Through most of this period kindergarten has been viewed by educators literally as a child's garden -- a place where children grew and matured. Many experiences were provided but the appropriateness and the timing of such experiences for the individual were not considered. Furthermore, little attention was given to the recognition of learning problems. It was felt that maturity and time would take care of these situations.

However, various forces in the 1960's caused a questioning in the way we were working with young children, and resulted in a redefining of educational programs for the young. Notably the work of Bloom, Bruner and Hunt pointed to the plasticity of the young child's mind and stressed the need for stimulation. With federal support for Headstart and available monies for the development of innovative programs for young children, great interest was shown in developing models for early education. Although most new programs dealt with either preschools or in helping primary children with special problems, relatively little interest was shown in the kinds of experiences all children should have upon entrance into school at age five.

The Ferguson-Florissant School District, in exploring and studying the area of early education, felt that the kindergarten was the place to begin making changes. Changes were made in several ways, with the major emphasis being placed on diagnostic-prescriptive teaching to meet individual needs. In order to point out these needs, all children were given the Screening Test of Academic Readiness at the beginning of the school year. The results of this testing were used to analyze specific skill attainment. On the basis of this analysis and teacher observation of performance, children received small group individualized instruction in language and math skills. New

00004

math and language materials were introduced into the kindergarten, which afforded the opportunity to teach toward individual needs. A new report card was also developed, which evaluated skills in personal-social development, language, math and science. Thus in many ways, teachers were helped to differentiate instruction and were provided with stronger program content.

The emphasis on more definite content and attempts to meet individual needs caused the teacher to look at the total program. She soon realized that there was not enough time in the school day to provide a variety of cognitive and creative learning experiences. At this time also, the kindergarten teachers were being considered more and more a part of the school staff and worthy of special services provided to other teachers. Individual testing was done by consultants and counselors. Kindergarten classes met regularly with the physical education and music teachers. However, there was just not time enough in a three-hour school day to provide a variety and balance of good learning experiences.

As changes were occurring in the kindergarten, the school district also studied the needs of younger children and, with the help of federal funding, started the Parent-Child Early Education Program, popularly called "Saturday School." This school and home learning program for four year old children and their parents provides group learning experiences for children on Saturdays, as well as regularly scheduled home teaching visits and follow-up learning activities provided by the parent in the home. With a strong emphasis on early identification and service to children with possible learning problems and an identification of skill attainment of all children in the Saturday School program, kindergarten teachers had even more information on incoming groups of children. As teachers in the Saturday School program relayed information about specific children to kindergarten teachers, it was apparent that a wider range of skills and abilities existed.

Other things were also happening in the Saturday School program that had an effect on the kindergarten. Primarily, the involvement of parents as helpers in Saturday School and the home teaching visit offered another dimension to be followed during the kindergarten year. As kindergarten teachers had moved into small group instruction, they had asked parents to assist them to some degree. But as the Saturday School program developed,

00605

they had a corps of parents who, by virtue of their work in Saturday School, could work with small groups of children for instructional purposes, assist at playtime, and just be a "helping hand." Then, too, the success of the home teaching visit with four year olds resulted in the need for a follow-up kind of experience in the kindergarten, and in another way changed the role of the kindergarten teacher.

In working in the home teaching visit, the Saturday School teacher was making a real effort not only to work with the child, but to establish a real relationship with the mother. In developing a relationship on the mother's home ground, the teacher role changed from that of position to one of acceptance and personal warmth. Thus, both in home and school, a more supportive relationship was being developed by the parent and the teacher for the mutual benefit of the child.

As the two phenomena were occurring -- one, a greater understanding of the intellectual needs of young children; and second, the recognition by the school to see itself in a broader sense as a supportive role to the parent, the need for a different kindergarten structure was evident. Thus, what we call the extended day was developed to provide a stronger educational program for children, age five.

00006

the extended day

The extended day program is designed to provide a well-rounded curriculum stressing cognitive social and physical development, with a longer period of time daily for the child in school, but then with greater opportunity for the teacher-parent relationship to be established. Instead of attendance for a three-hour session with a morning and afternoon group, the teacher works with one group of children from four and one-half to five hours daily. The remainder of her time is then used for home visits, preparing for parent aides, or assistance with small groups of primary children.

With kindergarten children at school for a longer period of time, the school day is organized to provide time for both quiet and active experiences. There are opportunities for child-selected as well as teacher-initiated activities. There are large and small group activities, as well as opportunities for work with the individual child. There is flexibility in the scheduling so as to meet the interests and needs of the children at particular times and for special projects.

When the initial extended day program was started, two plans were tried. At one school, some children with particular skill deficits remained for a longer period of time for intensified help. At another school, all children received the extended time for a period of the school year. Over the last several years, the kindergarten teachers in the seventeen elementary schools have developed various plans for extending school experiences for at least part of the year, depending upon the numbers of children involved. At this date, thirteen of the seventeen elementary schools are providing an extended day for all of their kindergarten children for the entire year.

The following plans suggest ways of organizing the extended day:

00607

PLAN A - 34 CHILDREN

All of these children attend school from 8:25 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. daily. The staff consists of one kindergarten teacher, one instructional aide part-time, and three mothers who help daily for 1½ hours.

8:25- 8:45	Opening Activities Weather, calendar, fingerplays, discussions, directions for work.
8:45-10:15	Group Time - with teacher, aide and parent volunteers; children work in math, language, independent activities in interest center, and/or mother-guided tasks.
10:15-10:30	Recess
10:30-12:00	Used for a variety of activities, depending on the day. Science, art, games, music, creative play, individual help.
12:00-12:45	Lunch and Recess
12:50- 1:20	Physical education or music
1:20- 1:40	Discussion, sharing, social studies, library period.
1:40	Story time
2:00	Dismissal Home visits and assisting in primary classrooms.

PLAN B - 60 CHILDREN - 2 TEACHERS

Each teacher is assigned 30 children, divided into two groups, with 15 coming early in the morning, and the remaining 15 coming later.

8:25	Group A arrives.
8:25-10:00	Small group individualized instruction in math and language. Group A remains until 1:00 p.m. From 10:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m., all 30 children are present.
10:00	Group B arrives.
10:00- 1:00	Children engage in art, music, physical education, social studies, science, creative play, lunch, story time.
1:00- 2:30	Group B participates in small group individualized instruction in math and language.
2:30	Home visits and planning.

00008

PLAN C - 52 CHILDREN WITH 1½ TEACHERS

8:25- 8:45	Opening; roll call, lunch count, weather calendar. Teachers share in instruction of all children. One teaches language arts and one teaches math.
8:45- 9:00	Make plans for the day. Explain and demonstrate independent activity which is the third task for the children during grouping.
9:00-10:10	Grouping for skill development: 3 activities. Three groups - two instructional groups and an independent activity with instruction by teacher, volunteer parent or teacher aide.
10:10-10:25	Monday and Friday - recess Tuesday and Thursday - share news, rhythms or free activity. Wednesday - story or music with music instructor.
10:25-10:50	Monday - music with music instructor Tuesday and Thursday - gym
10:50-11:10	A variety of activities are used: Total group social studies, science or handwriting. (The children are regrouped into two groups and have math two days a week until 11:10 during second semester.) One group has math, the other, free activity. Then the second group has math and the first has free activity.
11:10-11:25	Story
11:25	Dismiss those pupils who do not have extended day. Extended day group wash hands and go to cafeteria. (Sixth grade students and two volunteer mothers take children to the cafeteria.)
11:25-12:10	Lunch and recess
12:10-12:25	Games or rhythms - teacher-instructed. Mothers become familiar with their teaching tasks.
12:25- 1:25	Grouping - three activities - three groups: one language arts, remaining two groups are each directed by parent volunteers.
1:30	Dismissal Straighten room, gather home teaching materials.
2:00	Monday, Tuesday, Thursday - home visits. Wednesday - team planning, parent conference or scheduling home visits by phone. Friday - planning, helping beginning primary teachers or individual pupils, or attending committee meetings.

00009

planning for learning:

grouping

Within any group of children, there is a wide variety of interests, skills acquisition and general development. Realizing this, kindergarten teachers set the standards and organize workable small groups in order to individualize instruction for children. She uses her judgment and the results from formal and informal testing to determine which children should be instructed together, understanding that a range of skills and interests are a part of any normal grouping.

The specific learning that the teacher hopes will take place is dependent, of course, on the content of the curriculum initiated by the teacher, the nature of the group, and the teacher's leadership. In the regularly scheduled small group setting, there is a stimulating teacher-student interaction, and student involvement in the learning situation. There is emphasis on individual learning. The children are encouraged to exchange ideas with their peers and their teacher. Research has shown that the peer influence directly affects thinking, attitude development and social skills, and has a direct effect on achievement.

As the children progress, new groups are formed; however, the number of groups will be determined by the school facilities, enrollment, and instructional time, as well as the number of staff members; but even more important, it is determined by the maturity of the children, their growth patterns and learning styles. Teachers also work with individuals on a one-to-one basis in order to provide additional assistance as needed.

00010

Planning for learning:

parent assistance in the school

To provide the kindergarten teacher with assistance, parents are involved in the instructional program. Some teachers hold a parent meeting in the beginning of the school year, explain the procedures and gather a corps of mothers who will work for them on a regular basis. Other teachers hold an opening workshop in which parents assist in making games and learning activities for the classroom. Some teachers solicit the assistance of one mother who is then responsible for arranging for other parents to work on a regular basis.

Usually a teacher will get two mothers who will work with her during the instructional period. Children will rotate from group to group with various learning activities occurring. It is customary to see a teacher working with a group of children on certain language skills, a parent assisting another group in, perhaps, auditory memory or visual perception tasks, while a second mother aids children working at independent tasks, art activities or various learning centers. Children then rotate to the various groups for learning activities. The parent may also work individually with a child. The teacher prepares the task for the parent, has materials available and explains the procedures for instruction. Parents also assist in the cafeteria, on the playground, accompany children on a study trip, or assist in the Project Choice activities.

Parent assistance in the classroom serves a dual purpose. It aids in improving the instructional program for the child by providing increased learning experiences and it involves the parent in actually working with children and observing the uniqueness of each child. Besides this, it gives the parent a feeling of involvement, achievement and satisfaction.

00011

Planning for learning:

teacher assistance in the home

Research indicates that the child benefits when both the home and school have common goals. Thus, the home visit has become another link in establishing a strong parent-child-teacher relationship. The home visit has dual purposes: to show to the parent the child's achievements, and to stress areas in which further progress is deemed desirable.

This is conducted in two ways -- by parent-teacher conference and by actual teaching of the child. The teacher takes ideas and materials from school or uses them in the teaching process. The teacher may present a new game or activity which is appropriate and important for that child at his level of development. She may show the parent through a particular activity how the child is progressing. She will also demonstrate ways of assisting the child in a deficit area. The ultimate aim is to get the parent more involved in the teaching process.

The following suggestions are made to the kindergarten teachers in reference to conducting the home teaching visit.

WAYS TO HELP MOTHERS TEACH THEIR CHILDREN

1. Show the mother your own enthusiasm in what you and she are doing together.
2. Engage in person-to-person conversation (not teacher to parent).
3. Be certain that the mother knows what you are going to do - that you will teach the child.
4. It is important for the teacher to make statements that are clear to the parent. At the same time, the parent needs to be told about the child's progress. For example, some mothers believe their children "know the numbers from one to ten" when they can count by rote. However, these same children could not give you six crayons. Thus, they do not have an understanding of numbers. Parents need to see this difference.

00012

5. In teaching visits, the parent should be involved.

   a. Specific things should be prepared for the mother to do.

   b. First, show the mother how you work with her child on a specific task. Use all the techniques you want the mother to imitate - praise, reinforcement, attention, small steps, and moving to an easier task if the child can't do what you ask.

   c. When you teach the child in the mother's presence, talk only to the child and give your full attention to him.

   d. Talk with the mother later. Allow her to raise questions or bring up concerns of her own.

   e. When the parent shows things the child has done, be sure and show interest and praise. You may make suggestions about how the mother may go on to a more difficult stage or go back and review.

In summary, the teacher interaction with the child provides the best opportunity for the mother to observe and imitate. The mother should be taught to reward or reinforce the success of the child and come to realize that praise is much more important than blame in shaping behavior.

Other suggestions include:

a. Praise the child often.

b. State the objective of the activity to the mother and child.

c. Praise him as soon as he gets the task right.

d. Have the child verbalize the objective of the activity.

e. Do not criticize when he is wrong but go back to a task he can do and then go on to a task that is a little more difficult.

00013

f. Start each lesson with something he knows, then proceed to a new task and always end each lesson with a success - with something he knows.

As the mother works alone with the child, she needs to apply the following strategies:

a. Teach the child even when he doesn't realize he is being taught. Use the many opportunities that come up in talking with him.

b. Review the things the child has already learned. Don't be surprised if the child forgets.

c. Let the child learn a new task well.

d. Work regularly each day, but for brief periods of time - perhaps ten to fifteen minutes.

e. When working with the child, pay attention only to him.

f. Work at a time when both mother and child feel like it and the child is interested.

The value of home visits cannot be underestimated, for the teacher sees the child as a part of the total family, and the teacher, through her knowledge of the child and his development, shows the parents her personal concern for their child and his progress. Evidence from the Saturday School program indicates that those parents who were involved in working with their child showed greater knowledge of skill development and read more to their children than parents of children who did not receive preschool experience.

0011

summary

The extended day kindergarten offers a unique way to enrich the educational program for five year old children. It gives the school the opportunity to provide a wide range of learning activities during a longer school period. It offers increased opportunities for personalization of instruction.

In addition, it emphasizes the role of the parent in the educational process. The parent aids the teacher in the instructional program in the classroom. The teacher serves as a supportive force to the learning opportunities in the home as she makes home teaching visits and demonstrates good teaching practices. Thus, the home and school become partners for the good of the child.